Highway in the country at present, due to funds constraints 316 proposals for declaration of State roads as National Highways received from various States including 16 proposals in the State of Orissa have been returned to the respective State Governments in June, 2002 for review, based on the revised criteria for declaration of new National Highways. The Government, may however, consider declaration of a few State Highways as National Highways during the course of the Tenth Five Year Plan from amongst the modified proposals to be received from various States, keeping in view the traffic needs, *inter-se* priority and availability of funds.

(c) and (d)Yes, Sir. The National Highways in Orissa, damaged during the last floods/cyclone *etc.,* have been repaired. For this purpose, estimates amounting to Rs. 1543.74 lakhs were sanctioned for repairs to roads, culverts and protection works. These works have been completed. The funds were provided by the Central Government.

Tax collection in NER

2481. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the illegal tax collections on the National Highways in the North-Eastern States; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to prevent such illegal practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI):(a)Yes,Sir.

(b) Erection of check-posts/barriers on National Highways within the 'right of way' is not permitted as per the extant policy of the Central Government. However, the State Governments can erect tax collection barriers outside the 'right of way' of National Highways, with prior permission of the Central Government. Central Government has taken up the matter of removal of such check-posts/barriers falling

within the 'right of way' of National Highways with concerned State Governments.

North-South Highways Corridor in Tamil Nadu

2482. SHRI R. SHUNMUGASOUNDARAM: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the delay in executing the North-South highway corridor, beyond Tindivanam upto Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu;

(b) by when the same would be completed; and

(c) the places where road bridges are planned to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) to (c) Madurai-Kanyakumari section of National Highway-7 forms part of North-South Corridor. There is no delay in executing this stretch. At present, the consultancy services for this section is under finalisation. The project is targeted to be four laned by December, 2007, in phases. The details of bridges on this section would be known after Detailed Project Report (DPR) is completed.

The section between Tindivanam-Madurai *via* Trichy is not part of North-South Corridor. National Highways Authority to India will take up this stretch also as soon as the funding arrangement is finalised. However, DPR of this stretch has already been completed. Detailed Project Report of the section envisages construction of following bridges:

(1) Major Bridge (one) on river Korayar on National Highway-45B.

(2) Road Over Bridges (Eleven) at km 156.01, 165.283, 215.5, 310.682,318.614,321.51,321.65 on National Highway-45. Villupuram Bypass, Ulundurpet Bypass, Trichy Bypass and MDR Bypass on National Highway- 45B.

(3) Flyovers: (Four)

(i) On Tindivanam Bypass

(ii) Across Ulundurpet Bypass

(iii) Ai 318.6 km on National Highway-45